



# Seton Home



# Study School

Volume XXIII, Number 3



*“Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church”*



March 2006

## St. Joseph

During the month of March, we think of Saint Joseph as we celebrate his feast day on March 19<sup>th</sup>. The Church invites us to reflect on the life of St. Joseph, especially on his virtues as a husband and father.

Scripture tells us that St. Joseph was guided by an angel who spoke to him at night. This angel first appeared to him about his impending marriage to Mary. Joseph already showed virtue (“being a just man”) by his unwillingness to expose Mary to the law. After the angel spoke to him, St. Joseph readily accepted the angel’s explanation of Mary’s situation and took Mary as his wife. Also, he named his son Jesus as the angel had instructed him.

Certainly, we home schooling parents would be blessed if we prayed to St. Joseph to help us make good decisions regarding our marriages and those of our children when they grow up. The best example we can give our children for living the Catholic life is the example of a good marriage. Without a happy home, children will find it difficult to be happy themselves.

Home schooling fathers could imitate Joseph’s docility to the angel by praying every day to the guardian angels of family members to help them to make daily decisions regarding their families.

Home schooling fathers need to show their children that they themselves are under the authority of God, as St. Joseph showed in his obedience to the angel, by a life of daily prayer, frequent reception of the sacraments, and a willingness to learn and teach the Catholic Faith. By showing their submission to God and His Church, they can more effectively

teach their children the importance of obeying their parents who, like guardian angels, are God’s representatives.

St. Joseph acted immediately when his family was in danger. When he was warned by an angel in the middle of the night about Herod, he packed up that very night and left. He helped Mary and the Christ Child on the donkey, and then led them swiftly through the dark night on the long trip to Egypt. Fathers likewise must be on guard to quickly discern dangers to their families and act immediately to protect them.

When Jesus was twelve years old and missing from the group who had made the trip to Jerusalem for the Holy Days, Joseph and Mary took immediate action. They looked for Jesus among the travelers, and not finding Him, they made the decision to return to Jerusalem to search further. After three days of looking, they found Jesus in the Temple preaching to the priests and rabbis. Mary said to Him, “Your father and I have sought you.”

The example of Mary and Joseph encourages us parents to be aware of where our children are, both temporally and spiritually. We are to be interested in what our children are learning, and be concerned with helping them to learn properly and play fairly. We are to be interested in their spiritual lives, mostly by showing by example the importance of a spiritual plan of life.

We should be alert to protect our children from the world when they are not ready to face its challenges. If our children do fall into worldliness, let us pray to Mary and Joseph that we have the

firmness to remain true to the beliefs of our Faith and the practices that protect those beliefs, but at the same time, reach out to them as the father did to his prodigal son.

In the incident in the Temple, Jesus answered His mother by saying, “Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?” Nevertheless, he went home with them and “was submissive to them.” This incident teaches us that God’s will is first, but parental authority is real.

Jesus tells us parents that we must not “despise” the little ones because their guardian angels are always “beholding the face of God the Father in heaven.” This makes us realize that we must not neglect or “despise” spending time with our children since God has willed that parents are to guide their children to eternal life where they are to behold the face of God the Father in Heaven.

Good St. Joseph, Head of the Holy Family, pray for us home schooling parents to be good fathers and mothers so that our family may be holy. Good St. Joseph, Guardian of Domestic Life, guard us parents and children to live the family life that is modeled on the Holy Family. Good St. Joseph, honored among men, help our home schooling fathers to be the good examples of fathers that they are called to be by God our heavenly Father.

-MKC

## Inside . . .

Questions .....	2
Eucharistic Saints .....	4
Fathers .....	5
Take Up Your Cross .....	6
Deus Caritas Est .....	8



## *Questions We Are Asked*

*by Dr. Mary Kay Clark  
Director, Seton Home Study School*

**I am a first year enrolled family, and I have already called twice. Are we calling too much?**

You might need to call frequently when you are getting started, especially if you are new family. We understand that it can be difficult to adjust to home schooling and Seton's curriculum. Our counselors are available to help you with any problems that may arise, so do not be afraid to call us, even if it is just a small question.

We have counselors for the elementary levels as well as counselors for the specific subjects in the High School grades. Some of these include high school math, science and English counselors. Father Constantine is available for Religion, Latin, and French questions. Bruce Clark can help you with high school history questions. Manuel Vicente answers Spanish questions and Deacon Gene McGuirk can help with the Religion, Chemistry, Biology, Accounting, and Logic courses. Stephen Costanzo answers questions for parents who have children with special learning needs. You can find out more about our counselors by going to [www.setonhome.org](http://www.setonhome.org). Click on "About," and then click on "Staff."

Remember that you are not limited to receiving help by phone. We can also answer questions submitted by email, fax, or regular mail. One benefit to asking a question by email is that you can attach a sample of the student's work so that the counselor can see the work while answering the question. It is often easier for a counselor to see an example of a problem than to hear a description of the problem. The counselors' email address is [counselors@setonhome.org](mailto:counselors@setonhome.org). Our fax number is 540-636-1602.

**When I joined the local home schooling group, I was surprised by how many parents are not enrolled in a program.**

**I have been reluctant to stay in this group, since I feel a little out of place. What do you recommend?**

The first thing to keep in mind is the importance of constant, prayerful discernment in all matters involved in the homeschooling of your children. Prayer and discussion with your spouse are necessary to help you make this decision. At Seton, we emphasize the importance of structure in a student's educational experience. It seems unlikely that a child will receive a quality education without organization, discipline or careful planning of what will be taught.

While some parents can manage to teach the younger children without a program, by the time the children reach fifth or sixth grade, the concepts become more advanced and it would be hard to ensure that students are learning everything that they should. When the work becomes more challenging, a fixed schedule becomes necessary. However, the children may be uncooperative if they have not been used to disciplined learning. This can lead to frustration and disharmony within the family.

We would probably agree that discipline is necessary in the running of the household, and this should apply to homeschooling as well. Even if someone were to say that home education should not be forced, and that children should be free to learn or not learn as they see fit, the entire family enterprise cannot work in that way. If we tell children to do their math if they feel like it, would it be wise to tell them to learn their catechism only if they feel like it? If we tell them to do some reading if they can find the time, will we tell them as well to clean their rooms or change the baby if they can find the time?

The fact is that children do not thrive in a disorganized environment. Whether they realize it or not, they want to have discipline. Often children thank their parents later for setting rules and boundaries. How many adults are very happy today that their parents made them learn piano or violin? Your children will thank you one day for giving them discipline in their schooling.

**The tests I received from Seton do not seem to match the chapters in my Saxon Math 76 book. What should I do?**

We try to send the correct test with the edition of the textbook that you have. Problems arise when parents already have a book, but fail to indicate when they enroll in the course which edition they have. We do have tests available for several editions. Look carefully to see which edition you have and make sure it matches the tests you received. If you have the First Edition, there will be no indication on the spine of the book, but if you have a Second or Third Edition, it will be marked on the spine.

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If you want the DIVE computer disk (cost is \$50 from our SEM department) with the audio and video tutoring lessons, they are not available for the First Edition, but only for later editions. The most recent edition—called the "Homeschool" edition and available only for 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades—is very expensive. It has a large-sized textbook as well as a Solutions Manual and worksheets. This is available through our SEM department, but we do not have Seton tests to match this edition. We think that families may find the high price of the Homeschool Edition too

expensive, and we wonder if it will be continued long-term.

If you have any further questions, you can ask our Shipping Department or our Math Counselors.

**I noticed you have added some samples and instruction for the Book Analyses on your website. Why weren't these sent along with the lesson plans?**

After a certain point, we feel that more information can be too much information. Most of the high school English lesson plans are running about 200 pages since they must include answer keys as well as the lesson plans, as well as a significant number of appendices.

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*The future of our society depends upon our youth learning to think correctly, especially in matters of faith and morals, but also in matters of culture and society.*

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Rather than putting all possible resources into the lesson plans, we put some of the helpful but not essential resources on our website. This includes such items as the Chapter Notes for the books we send for Book Reports in the elementary grades and for the Book Analyses in the high school grades.

We recently added some resources on My Seton which demonstrate the thinking process to analyze characterization, conflict, and theme. These samples, written by an outstanding teacher, use short stories to demonstrate how to complete the Book Analysis assignments. These have been available for only a few months, but they seem to be very popular.

By the summertime we hope to have a new Reading-Thinking Skills workbook for 7<sup>th</sup> graders and another for 8<sup>th</sup> graders which will give junior-high students a

preliminary experience in the analytical assignments before they reach high school. These should be included in the enrollments shipped out this summer.

**My daughter is doing very well in most of the Seton courses, but she is struggling with the English.**

This is a common problem because English courses demand more inductive thinking than deductive thinking. We are asking students to read a work of fiction, and draw a conclusion from their reading of it. They are asked to prove that conclusion with concrete examples. This is not an easy skill to master.

The critical thinking skills required in our Literature courses are also needed in the Geometry course, in which students memorize theorems or mathematical principles, and then need to decide which one applies to a particular problem. This kind of thinking is introduced in the math word problems starting in the early grades. You will also find these skills demanded in the high school History questions which ask the student "Why is this person or event significant in history?"

We are trying to teach our students that they should think ideas through to logical conclusions. The future of our society depends upon our youth learning to think correctly, especially in matters of faith and morals, but also in matters relating to culture and society. Encourage your children to persevere in thought and prayer when they do these analytical assignments.

On a practical level, the most difficult part of doing the English assignments is generally just getting started. Parents can be helpful in this area. If your daughter is trying to do an assignment but she is having problems, sit down with her and ask her questions about what she wants to say. Sometimes it can help them just to have someone to discuss the topic orally. From her replies, help her to make an outline. Once she has an outline, writing the assignment will be much easier.

For more individualized help and questions, please feel free to call a Seton counselor.

**I am confused about sending some work to Seton over the internet. May we send some by mail also?**

We encourage you to send tests and assignments over the internet, but we have difficulty when different assignments in the same quarter are sent in both ways. We are less likely to make mistakes in recording grades if you send everything for one quarter in a particular subject either by mail or by internet. For instance, you might send all the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter English assignments by mail, but all the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter history assignments by internet.

One problem we are having is that students are taking an online test or sending an assignment over the internet, and then mailing a paper copy of the same test or assignment. In that case, the tests and assignments are graded twice because our paper graders who grade from home are not able to check to see if what they are grading has been previously graded by the computer or by an online grader. Please send an individual assignment by one method only.

**I think my daughter is doing well with her writing, but I am not sure. How can I compare her work with work from other students in her grade level?**

One of the things we would like to do is to find paragraphs or reports written by students which we could put on our website as examples of A, B, or C work done at different elementary grade levels. Until then, however, you can send a sample of work by email to one of our counselors who will help evaluate it. Also, the benefit of the Seton grading services is that an instructor will provide feedback that will give you a sense of how much improvement she needs.

We hope that our lesson plans and books give adequate help, but we do offer workbooks for helping with writing skills. If you look on our website and click on Book Catalog, you should be able to find descriptions of *Composition for Young Catholics* (for Grade 8 or 9, primarily), *Writing Step by Step* (Grades 3 to 8), *Lessons in Writing Sentences* (two books for Grades 5 & 6, 7 & 8), *Report Writing* (Grades 8 and 9), and *Writing Skills* (books for different levels, Grades 4 to 12).

## *Eucharistic Saints*

*by Glen Tortorella*

*from a talk by Fr. John A. Hardon*

What is meant by the term “Eucharistic saint”? The expression “Eucharistic saint” may seem something of a misnomer. Belief in and devotion to the Holy Eucharist is a central and defining aspect of Christ’s one, true religion. Hence, all of the Church’s saints may be referred to as “Eucharistic saints.” There have been saints, however, who have been particularly exemplary in their understanding and adoration of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Father John A. Hardon, in his lecture “Eucharistic Saints,” discusses the lives of several “Eucharistic saints,” and, in his examination of their extraordinary faith, knowledge, and works, he explains the doctrinal foundations of the Holy Eucharist.

Father begins, “There is no sanctity without the Eucharist.” Throughout the Church’s history, the saints have honored and adored Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. The Fathers and Doctors of the Church have written voluminously on the incomparable perfection and mystical splendor of the Holy Eucharist.

Considering the lengthy catalog of Catholic saints, Father Hardon explores the doctrinal explications, inner motivations, and unique inspirations of some of the most heroic and noteworthy, beginning with Saint Cyril of Jerusalem. Saint Cyril showed great faith and stalwart adherence to Catholic truth. “This Doctor of the Church, as Bishop of Jerusalem, suffered deeply for his faith. He was the sworn enemy of the heretic Arius, who denied Christ’s divinity.”

Saint Cyril, who lived in the fourth century, blessed the Church with many exquisite theological writings. “Cyril’s most important writing was *The Catechetical Compendium*, which has become the standard of all catechisms since the end of the fourth century.” Some of Saint Cyril’s most illuminating works are those that pertain to the Holy Eucharist. “Saint Cyril wrote extensively on the Holy Eucharist as sacrifice, communion, and Real

Presence. His writings are not only clear and uncomplicated, they show us how unqualified was the faith of the early Church.”

Demonstrating the directness and undiluted faith of Saint Cyril is his definition of the Holy Eucharist: “The bread and wine of the Eucharist before the invocation of the Holy and adorable Trinity were simply bread and wine, but after the invocation the bread becomes the Body of Christ, and the wine becomes the Blood of Christ.” Saint Cyril’s words are both informative and unmistakable. Saint Cyril’s definition of the Holy Eucharist is one of unqualified clarity. When one studies the writings of the saints of the early Church, one finds that they are “all attesting to the presence of the living Christ in the Holy Eucharist through the words of consecration at Mass.”

Father compares the faith of Saint Cyril and the saints of the early Church to that of today. “I see in our day, in professedly Catholic theologians, an undermining of the faith of the true Church...[they claim] that belief in the Real Presence is a later development of Christian thought.” Yet, “The earliest Fathers of the Church never dissociated the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist from the priesthood. Christian patrology...always associates these two sacraments, the Holy Eucharist and the priesthood. Without the priesthood, there would be no Eucharist.”

“For the first thousand years of Christian history, there was no serious challenge to the Real Presence.” But then Berengarius of Tours (999-1088) “attacked the Church’s doctrine.” Berengarius denied the Real Presence, claiming that Christ could not be both in Heaven and on earth. In the thirteenth century, as Eucharistic errors became more widespread, “The Vicar of Christ ordered a special feast to be instituted, called Corpus Christi, the *Body of Christ*. ...The pope ordered Saint Thomas Aquinas to compose the Divine Office for this feast. Within the Divine Office,

Aquinas composed hymns that remain over the centuries the bedrock of our faith in the Real Presence.”

In the beautiful words of Saint Thomas’ hymn for Corpus Christi, “there is an ocean of doctrinal implications. What should be emphasized, however, is the unquestioning reality of Christ’s completeness, which means total presence, in every particle of the consecrated host, no matter how tiny, and in every drop on the consecrated chalice.”

Continuing the analysis, we turn to the life and Eucharistic doctrine of Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque (1647-1690). “Saint Margaret Mary is the apostle of the modern devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. ...From early childhood, she was intensely devoted to the Blessed Sacrament. After four years of suffering from paralysis, she was miraculously cured by Our Lady. She entered the Visitation convent ...and was distinguished for obedience, humility, and love of suffering.”

Saint Margaret Mary had many visions of Our Lord in which He told her “to promote devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.” What exactly is devotion to the Sacred Heart? “The simplest identification of devotion to the Sacred Heart is to say devotion to the Sacred Heart is devotion to the Holy Eucharist.” While Saint Margaret Mary’s writings “are not extensive,” they are “eminently practical.” Saint Margaret Mary “wrote many letters to people who asked for counsel.” In one letter, Saint Margaret Mary instructs a correspondent, “Each quality of Christ’s life in the Holy Eucharist is a model for us to imitate.” She suggests that one should “rejoice in the crosses that God sends you because this is the deepest proof of your love for Christ.”

Further aspects of the Eucharist were expounded and enhanced in response to the Protestant Revolt. Among those saints of the time who wrote about the Eucharist was Saint Alphonsus Liguori. “Among the results of the Protestant iconoclasm which denied the Real Presence was the martyrdom of many priests who were put to death while celebrating Mass. Why? Because they

*Cont’d on page 7*

## *Fathers Make a Difference*

*by Doug Bean*

Dads need to know that they can make a difference in Catholic homeschooling families. A big difference.

They can make a difference as co-equal partners with their wives by wholeheartedly embracing the gift of home education and becoming actively involved. They can make a difference in the religious and intellectual formation of their children. They can be the difference in whether a family ultimately succeeds or struggles, thrives or survives, stays the course or burns out. But it takes commitment. It takes sacrifice. It takes humility.

Commitment comes from the heart and soul. It is not enough to offer a few encouraging words, help with a subject at the end of the day or take the children to the park. Fathers owe it to their wives, their children and to Our Blessed Lord to enthusiastically participate in every facet of home education.

Pope John Paul II has emphasized again and again the Church's teaching that parents have a fundamental mission to be the primary educators of their children. There is absolutely no question that Catholic home education is more rewarding when husbands work together with their wives. Fatherhood, therefore, is a dad's foremost vocation.

Catholic fathers bear a serious responsibility to be holy fathers as head of the family—just as the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, is head of the Universal Church and the shepherd of the entire human family as the Vicar of Christ.

In nurturing a holy family, fathers also strive to be humble and caring like St. Joseph, the head of the Holy Family. St. Joseph provides the perfect model as a patient and gentle teacher, a pillar of faith and a faithful provider for the Blessed Mother and Jesus.

Certainly, the man of the household is usually charged with being a worthy bread winner. But he must be wary of putting his own career aspirations before family needs. For what does it profit a man if he neglects the beautiful souls entrusted to him by God? Nothing should be more important than guiding God's children (remember, they are His, not ours as parents) on the pathway to eternal life.

A father's commitment has to start with his Catholic faith as spiritual leader of the household.

Catholic home education requires a holy communion between husband and wife, father and mother, parents and children—and a Holy Communion with Jesus Christ in His precious Body and Blood offered in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

The importance of the father taking his family to Mass (daily, if possible), visiting churches or chapels to adore Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, going to Confession often, praying (Rosary, Divine Mercy chaplet, novenas, etc.) and living a devoted Catholic life is absolutely essential. A father's strong faith is a powerful witness to his children that will form lifetime devotion to Christ and His Church.

It is an amazing grace for homeschooling fathers and their families to be able to deepen their faith through teaching and learning together. This is one of the great benefits of the domestic church, the church of the home. As dads and moms teach and study, everyone in the household grows in knowledge and love for the Church, Jesus, His Blessed Mother, and all the angels and saints.

Home education does require sacrifice on a father's part. He gives up leisure time to devote himself to his family. He runs on sleep deprivation.

He assists around the house with daily chores and gives his wife a break from the awesome, all-consuming job of being a mother. He shuttles the children to appointments and activities when he is available. And, if possible, he might even alter his work schedule to make it more conducive to homeschooling.

Fathers should not be intimidated by homeschooling. It is not necessary to be an expert in theology or child psychology or mathematics to help in the home classroom. The graces, acquired through prayer and the sacrament of Matrimony, imbue dads with God-given parental wisdom to impart to their children.

So when and how do families integrate fathers into the homeschooling environment?

Writing out or printing out lesson plans is a great place to start. Not only is it a great benefit to know what each child is studying during the week, it facilitates collaboration with moms in determining what subjects to teach, the best times to assist and the most effective methods of instruction.

If a father has an area of expertise such as science, he should not hesitate to take a leading role in that subject. Other practical ways to ease into the homeschooling routine are praying, reading stories, playing learning games, singing, conversing, writing letters and listening to the children read.

Whatever fathers do, they absolutely need to pray for supernatural graces and ask for Our Blessed Lord's guidance every step of the way. Homeschooling can be a very humbling experience. But with God's guidance, no challenge or problem is too great.

Our sinful world needs humble witnesses to the faith more than ever. As Father John A. Hardon, SJ, often said, only humble people will beget humble people. Pray that humble homeschooling fathers beget humble, holy children to serve God and one day reach His heavenly reward.

## Take Up Your Cross

by Ginny Seuffert

*“If any man wishes to be my follower, he must deny his very self, pick up his cross and follow me.” Matt 16:24*

Lent is a good time for home schooling parents to meditate on these words of Our Lord. The cross is such a huge part of our own lives, as Catholic parents living in a decidedly anti-Catholic culture, and most particularly as home schooling moms and dads. I might go so far as to say that Catholic home education is impossible unless we are willing to deny our very selves—daily—and not only accept, but actually embrace the cross. According to those who were close to him, that giant of the end of the last century, the late Jesuit Father John Hardon, believed that it is the sacrifices of home schooling families that will revitalize and restore the Catholic Church in North America.

During Lent, Catholic moms and dads help their children to choose appropriate seasonal penances so they remember the sufferings of Our Blessed Lord, and to help them develop the virtues of self-sacrifice and moral toughness. One huge advantage we parents enjoy is that we do not need to pick our own penances; daily tribulations and mortifications just seem to find us! This month’s column is a bit of a departure. Usually I discuss how to overcome our daily struggles with a healthy dose of common sense rules and simplified routines. This month we’ll talk about what to do when nothing we do seems to make things any better, and no solution is in sight.

Here’s an example that seems to pop up all the time in those Catholic families that are being generous and accepting a new member every year or two—not enough money. In the vast majority of Catholic home schooling households, Dad is the primary breadwinner, with Mom either working a few hours part time, or not at all. Most of us recognize the clear value of a parent-present household and cheerfully buy food in bulk, put off frivolous purchases, and drive the family car until it’s ready for the junkyard. We see the benefit to our children who do

not become greedy and materialistic because there are not a whole lot of material goods to be greedy about in our homes. Then it happens! The furnace dies or the roof starts to leak and these purchases can’t be put off, so we use the Christmas fund or take out a loan. Now we’re faced with buying Christmas presents on credit or making payments for three years. This is a common discouraging feature in the lives of large families and there is very little that any of us can do about it. Dads especially feel the stress of not earning enough money despite their best, often approaching heroic, efforts to balance the demands of their jobs and monthly bills against the time spent with the kids.

Parents, especially you dads, let me encourage you to embrace the cross of financial worries. As my husband and I celebrate our 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary next month, the incredible money woes connected with raising twelve children left no permanent scars. Our older children are better persons—in every way—for having been denied just a bit when they were younger, and for learning how to provide for themselves.

Another cross in our families is just the tremendous burden of labor involved in feeding and clothing a large family, changing all those diapers, getting three meals on the table and cleaning up that high traffic area that we call home. Then add home schooling to the mix! This stress can certainly affect Dad when he comes home from a long day on the job only to discover a house in chaos and dinner just a dim hope; however, all this work is Mom’s special cross. Many days—maybe most days—mom feels like she works from the time she gets out of bed until she collapses back into it, and still has a messy home, and feels like she neglected the children.

Moms, this cross, made up of the timber of your hard work, is the road to your sanctification. Accept this burden first of all, and then seek to perfect yourself by accepting it cheerfully. Your children will not remember a few dishes in the sink,

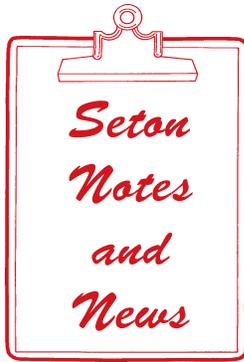
but they may regret memories of Mom screaming about them. As an added benefit, they will develop stronger character and confidence by sharing in the work required to keep a large family afloat.

A special characteristic of this particular cross, as it relates to home schooling moms, is the isolation she often feels. Most moms would not call themselves “lonely”; in fact, few of them ever find even a few minutes alone with their own thoughts. Nonetheless, most moms of young children would relish a bit of adult conversation, away from kid care, housework, and schoolbooks. They just rarely find the time.

When feeling isolated and stressed out from overwork, I personally found, and continue to find, solace meditating on the Blessed Sacrament. Jesus Christ, the Second person of the Blessed Trinity and the Redeemer of all mankind, remains alone and hidden in tabernacles all over the world. How He must long for His faithful servants to come and spend just one hour with Him! Moms, unite yourself with Our Blessed Lord; unite your suffering with His. If you can actually spend a few minutes in front of the tabernacle, do so, but if this is impossible for you, unite your heart with His and ask for comfort.

Daily life in a Catholic family offers many crosses to our children as well, and we parents need to help them recognize and embrace these opportunities to grow holy. Encourage them to pitch in around the house, and to do it with a smile. Let them know that when they sacrifice good times with their friends to care for younger siblings, they are actually working for the Kingdom of God. We never want to give God less than the best, so remind them that their most excellent efforts in schoolwork can be a source of sanctification.

The funny thing about the cross is that once we accept its irreplaceable role in our lives, it becomes a great friend. We see our daily contradictions and mortifications as a chance to earn graces for our spouses, our children, friends, relatives and ourselves. Do not forget to offer up some of your sacrifices for homeschooling families and especially for Seton staff.



**Conferences**

Many state and local groups are now sponsoring their own conferences, inviting various Catholic vendors and curriculum providers. Seton is happy to participate at these conferences as a vendor. For more information, contact Mary Lou Warren at 540-636-9990.

**March 11, Miami, FL.** Southern Florida Pro-Life, Home School and Family Conference 2006. **NEW LOCATION:** Miami Airport Marriott, 1201 NW LeJeune Rd, Miami. Conference from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Preregistration online at [www.setonhome.org/miami](http://www.setonhome.org/miami). Phone registration at 540-636-9990 ext. 116. For local info contact Laura at [laurabaq@bellsouth.net](mailto:laurabaq@bellsouth.net) or 305-278-0565. Speakers include Fr. Frank Papa, Mrs. Virginia Seuffert, and Mrs. Magally Llaguno.

**March 18, Kansas City, KS.** 2006 Kansas City Catholic Homeschool Conference St. Paul's Catholic Parish & School. Registration at 7:30 AM, Mass at 8:00 AM. Conference closes at 4:30 PM. 900 South Honeysuckle Drive, Olathe, KS. 66061. For info contact Cynthia at 913-652-0831, or [cmaddock@everestkc.net](mailto:cmaddock@everestkc.net). Speakers include Mrs. Virginia Seuffert

**March 24-25, Memphis, TN.** 7th Annual Catholic Curriculum Fair & Homeschool Conference, St. Louis Catholic Church, 203 S. White Station Rd., Memphis, TN. Hours: Fri.: 2 PM - 9:30 PM, Sat.: 8:45 AM - 3:30 PM. For info: [blessedsacramenthomeschool.org](http://blessedsacramenthomeschool.org).

**April 1, Ankeny, IA (Des Moines area).** 6th Annual Catholic Family Homeschool Conference, Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Catholic Church, 510 E. 1st St., Ankeny, IA. Speakers include Mrs. Marianna Bartold. For info go to website: [www.Columbus-Academy.org](http://www.Columbus-Academy.org).

**April 1, Harrisburg, PA.** 12th Annual Catholic Homeschool Conference & Curriculum Fair, Holy Name of Jesus Parish, 6190 Allentown Blvd. (Route 22 West), Harrisburg, PA. Hours: 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM. Speakers include Fr. Robert Levis. For info go to website: [www.catholichomeschoolpa.org](http://www.catholichomeschoolpa.org).

*Cont'd from page 4*

were charged with the idolatry of claiming that priests have the power to bring Jesus Christ on earth in the Holy Eucharist. ...By the eighteenth century, God raised up courageous defenders. Among these defenders, the most famous was Saint Alphonsus Liguori."

Saint Alphonsus, who lived from 1696 to 1787, "published some one hundred volumes on every aspect of spirituality." One of his great works is simply titled, *The Holy Eucharist*. In this work, Saint Alphonsus' Eucharistic doctrine is straightforward and uncompromising, as he explains that Our Lord is "really present under the appearance of bread and wine." Saint Alphonsus strengthens his explication, and demonstrates his great knowledge and faith, by adding: "But we must also understand that He is thus present on our altars as on a throne of love and mercy to dispense graces, and there to show us the love which He bears us by being pleased to dwell night and day hidden in our midst."

There is no doubt that the saints are our admirable guides to Heaven, and that their words and deeds point us in the direction of holiness and wisdom. The faith, writings, and thoughts of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Saint Margaret Mary, and Saint Alphonsus Liguori stand as a testament to the ancient, apostolic truth of Our Lord's Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist.

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## *Deus Caritas Est*

12. Though up to now we have been speaking mainly of the Old Testament, nevertheless the profound compenetration of the two Testaments as the one Scripture of the Christian faith has already become evident. The real novelty of the New Testament lies not so much in new ideas as in the figure of Christ himself, who gives flesh and blood to those concepts—an unprecedented realism. In the Old Testament, the novelty of the Bible did not consist merely in abstract notions but in God's unpredictable and in some sense unprecedented activity. This divine activity now takes on dramatic form when, in Jesus Christ, it is God himself who goes in search of the “stray sheep”, a suffering and lost humanity. When Jesus speaks in his parables of the shepherd who goes after the lost sheep, of the woman who looks for the lost coin, of the father who goes to meet and embrace his prodigal son, these are no mere words: they constitute an explanation of his very being and activity. His death on the Cross is the culmination of that turning of God against himself in which he gives himself in order to raise man up and save him. This is love in its most radical form. By contemplating the pierced side of Christ (cf. 19:37), we can understand the starting-point of this Encyclical Letter: “God is love” (1 Jn 4:8). It is there that this truth can be

contemplated. It is from there that our definition of love must begin. In this contemplation the Christian discovers the path along which his life and love must move.

13. Jesus gave this act of oblation an enduring presence through his institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. He anticipated his death and resurrection by giving his disciples, in the bread and wine, his very self, his body and blood as the new manna (cf. Jn 6:31-33). The ancient world had dimly perceived that man's real food—what truly nourishes him as man—is ultimately the Logos, eternal wisdom: this same Logos now truly becomes food for us—as love. The Eucharist draws us into Jesus' act of self-oblation. More than just statically receiving the incarnate Logos, we enter into the very dynamic of his self-giving. The imagery of marriage between God and Israel is now realized in a way previously inconceivable: it had meant standing in God's presence, but now it becomes union with God through sharing in Jesus' self-gift, sharing in his body and blood. The sacramental “mysticism”, grounded in God's condescension towards us, operates at a radically different level and lifts us to far greater heights than anything that any human mystical elevation could ever accomplish.

Benedict XVI, December 25, 2005

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